

# SPORTS BRIEFS

## BASKETBALL

### Women's Final Four

Stanford and Tennessee, which have six national championships between them, put on impressive displays to move into the Final Four of the NCAA women's basketball tournament Monday night, joining Old Dominion and Notre Dame. Both teams advanced to their third straight Final Four. The Cardinal avenged a 10-point loss to Georgia at the 1996 Final Four. Stanford (34-1) has won its four games in the tournament by an average of 33 points. Tennessee (27-10) ended Connecticut's perfect season Monday night with a 91-81 victory.

### Page enters NBA Draft

Georgetown sophomore guard Victor Page, the Big East Conference's leading scorer, announced Monday he will forgo the final two years of his college eligibility and enter the NBA draft. Page, a 6-3 shooting guard, averaged 22.7 points per game and was named first-team all-Big East.

### Next LSU men's basketball coach

Samford coach John Brady Monday accepted an offer to become the next coach of Louisiana State University. Although terms of the contract have yet to be finalized, Brady was introduced at a press conference Tuesday. He will replace Dale Brown, who announced during the season he would step down at the end of the year after 25 years at Baton Rouge.

## FOOTBALL

### Packers' six-time Pro Bowl TE retires

Six-time Pro Bowler Keith Jackson of the Green Bay Packers, one of the NFL's most productive tight ends over the past decade, has retired. Jackson, who turns 32 on April 19th, was the active leader among tight ends with 441 receptions. He had more touchdowns (49) since 1988 than any other tight end and closed his career with 5,283 receiving yards.

### Clemson extends Barnes' contract

After guiding Clemson to a 23-10 record and school-best number two ranking in the polls earlier in the year, head coach Rick Barnes agreed Monday to a contract extension through the 2003-2004 campaign. Barnes, who owns a 54-35 record in three seasons at Clemson, led the Tigers into the top-10 for 14 straight weeks and in the top-20 the whole season.

### Dolphins sign free agent Dawsey

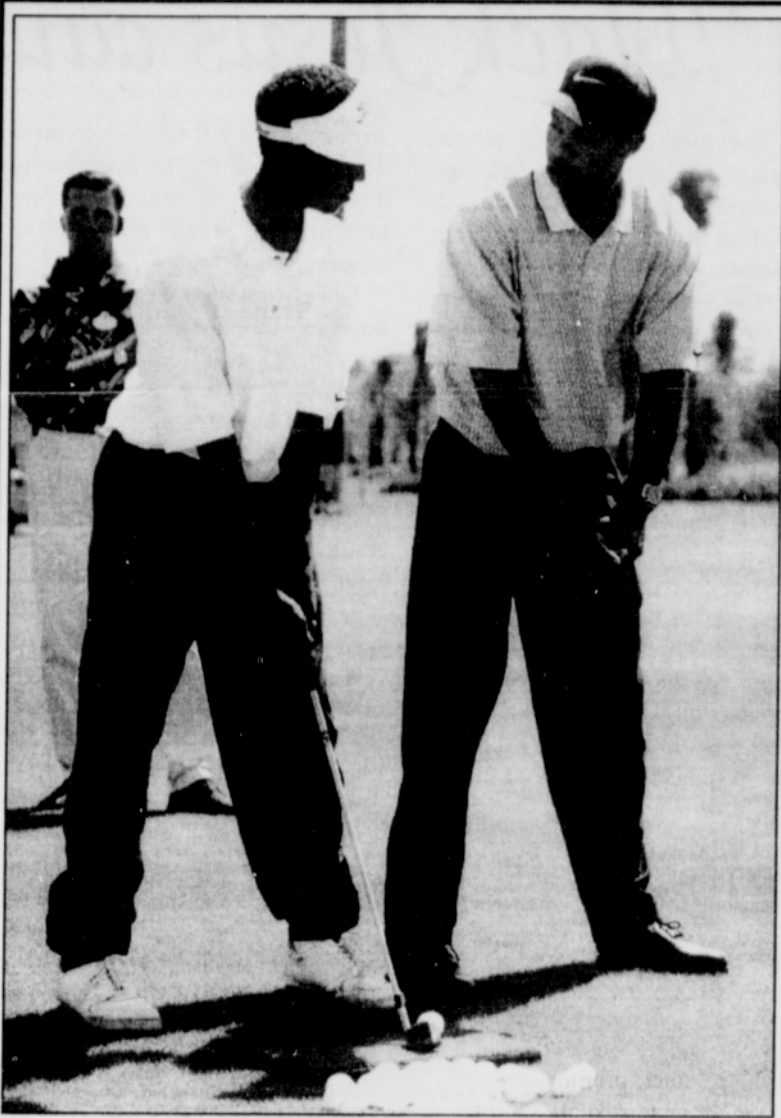
The Miami Dolphins Monday signed unrestricted free agent wide receiver Lawrence Dawsey to a two-year contract. The 29-year-old Dawsey, who spent the first five years of his NFL career with Tampa Bay and played last season for the New York Giants, will likely serve as a backup to starters O.J. McDuffie and Fred Barnett in Miami.

## BASEBALL

### Reds C Joe Oliver sidelined 4-6 weeks

Cincinnati Reds catcher Joe Oliver is expected to undergo surgery later this week to repair a torn ligament in his left thumb and will be sidelined from four to six weeks. A team spokesman said the surgery would take place on Wednesday or Thursday.

# SPORTS



## A TIP FROM TIGER

Tiger Woods conducted the first in a national series of youth clinics launched by the Tiger Woods Foundation, an organization he has formed to improve minority participation and opportunities in golf, March 16, at Disney's Wide World of Sports in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

photo from The Walt Disney Company

## FSU HOPING FOR A DIFFERENT UCONN GAME

Pat Kennedy couldn't review the game films of the last time his Florida State team played Connecticut. And that's just the way he planned it.

"I think we burned every copy of that we could get our hands on," Kennedy said.

The Seminoles will play the Huskies tonight in the NIT's first semifinal game (7 p.m. EST) at Madison Square Garden. Last season, Connecticut took a 20-point lead in the opening minutes and embarrassed Florida State 79-61 on national television.

Kennedy was so embarrassed with his team's performance that night, he wrote a letter of apology to FSU fans and sent it to a local newspaper.

"I thought it was as bad a game as we've ever played," he said.

Now, three straight wins have given Florida State an opportunity to reverse the loss and earn a first-ever trip into the NIT championship game.

"Our guys were plenty excited when they found out who we were going to play," Kennedy said.

The Connecticut-Florida State winner will meet the winner of tonight's second semifinal between Arkansas (18-12) and Michigan (22-11). The winners will meet in Thursday's championship game following a third-place matchup.

The Seminoles went 6-10 in the Atlantic Coast Conference this season before losing to Wake Forest by one point in the ACC tournament. That loss probably cost Florida State

a trip to the NCAAs.

But FSU has reeled off three victories in the NIT, including road wins at Syracuse and West Virginia to get to New York.

"Our kids are fired up," Kennedy said.

The same could be said for the NIT. This year's semifinalists give the tournament a final four comparable to this week's Final Four in Indianapolis. All are strong basketball programs from big-name conferences with big-name coaches and players.

"The four of us could be in there also," Arkansas coach Nolan Richardson said of this year's Final Four. "I don't think the winner here is the No. 65 team in the country, far from it. ... The NCAA is a great tournament, but when you look at all 64 teams there, there are probably 25 or 30 of them who couldn't win the NIT."

Richardson isn't talking trash. He's led the Razorbacks to three Final Four appearances in 12 years, including 1994 when Arkansas defeated Duke for the school's first NCAA title.

His inexperienced team — there is just one senior on the roster — was inconsistent during the regular season, but has jelled in the postseason by winning all three of its NIT games at home.

Like all Richardson teams, this one applies defensive pressure the full 94 feet of the floor, and loves 3-pointers — 690 attempts this sea-

son.

"We're a perimeter team," Richardson said. "We're not as physical as some of my teams in the past. Sometimes, I don't know which team is going to show up, but when the right one does, then we're pretty good."

So is Michigan. After starting the year ranked No. 9 in the nation, the Wolverines, who start three juniors and two sophomores, missed the NCAAs by losing six of seven games during a late stretch in February.

The Wolverines' first two NIT wins came at home before a thrilling 67-66 victory at Notre Dame last week to earn their trip to New York. In that game, Robert Traylor, Michigan's 6-foot-8, 300-pound sophomore center, scored a career-high 26 points, grabbed 13 rebounds and blocked the final Irish shot.

Notre Dame's student section taunted Traylor by waving keys and chanting "Suburban" when he attempted shots. Questions have been raised concerning a \$47,000 Suburban he's been driving lately.

Traylor says a relative paid for the car. But Michigan officials said last week a booster with close ties to Traylor was involved in violations of NCAA rules.

But it's Traylor's on-the-court driving that worries.

"The Tractor Traylor, I hope he don't run over my little 190-pound guy that's going to be guarding him," Richardson said.

## NCAA MENS FINAL FOUR

The rumors fly. Providence coach Pete Gillen got the job done in the Tournament with Xavier, and now with the Friars. Is he looking for greener pastures? ("No comment," the coach said when asked about the subject. "I'm very happy at Providence right now and that's all I'll say right now"). Providence point guard God Shammgod — he of the nifty ballhandling tricks and unstoppable drives — scored 22 points Sunday in the biggest game of his career.

With the Friars' top scorers, Austin Croshere and Derrick Brown, lost to graduation, look for Shammgod to significantly increase his 1996 scoring average (10.5 ppg) next season, to complement his already prodigious assist numbers (6.6 apg in '96).

Who's hot? Mile Simon, Arizona: 30 points vs. Providence Shammond Williams, UNC: 22 points vs. Louisville God Shammgod, Providence: 23 points vs. Arizona Ruben Garces, Providence: 16 points and 19 rebounds

Who's not? Alvin Sims, Louisville: 4 of 10 from the floor, 11 points vs. UNC Jason Murdock, Providence: 0 for 2 from the floor, untimely technical foul vs. Arizona.

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